



Tips For Buying Green

“Integrity is what you do when no one is watching; it's doing the right thing all the time, even when it may work to your disadvantage.” Tony Dungy

Top questions to ask yourself when buying for your business

1. Where is this item made and how far will it travel to get here? – Keep in mind; just because the company you are purchasing it from may be nearby, they are not necessarily the manufacturer. Example: many compostable products are made in China.
2. What type of packaging is being used? It's surprising, but products that are “green” or “eco-friendly” often come in packaging that cannot be recycled.
3. When buying paper products like copy paper, envelopes, labels etc; look for the FSC label or buy products that are recycled or recyclable. Customers are getting more savvy and will notice the FSC label on your envelopes...just sayin’.
4. When remodeling consider buying reconditioned office furniture. If you are a small business and creative you can even have fun with your décor by hitting the Habitat Re-Store or consignment shops for furniture that can both be functional and have your customers talking. Everybody loves a good bargain and it shows you are both frugal and green! Also be sure to donate your old items to Re-Store or Goodwill. One persons trash...
5. When buying things like new appliances, water heaters etc., check to see if there are tax credits, or energy credits available for your purchase. It's great to be rewarded for upgrading to a more efficient option.
6. Check out options like Cartridge World to buy refilled ink cartridge. Many of the office supply stores also offer a rebate when you turn in used cartridges.



7. Buy in bulk. Less packaging is usually the greener way to go. Many commercial cleaning products are highly concentrated so a large bottle will last a long time.

8. Know what is in your cleaning products. Most manufacturers offer a line of more eco-friendly cleaners. To insure that your products have been certified look for GreenSeal or Ecologo.

9. When buying a product, ask yourself: Is it made locally? If not, is it made in the Southeast, in the USA? Is made from a renewable resource? Can the product be reused or recycled? If you compost at your place of business, use paper products that can be composted whenever possible, this is the best course of action.

10. The following are some certifications that insure that your purchase has been approved by a third party verification service that guarantees that companies claims. Green Seal, Ecologo, MBDC cradle to cradle, SMART certification by MTS, LEED for buildings, Greenguard for indoor air quality, FLO for Fair Trade, Organic, FSC (Forest Stewardship Council), EnergyStar. Beware of labels touting a product as natural, eco-friendly or even "made from recycled materials", without third party certification these claims can vary widely. One resource to check on labels is: Consumer Reports Greener Choices website:

<http://www.greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/eco-home.cfm>

www.carolinagreenfair.com